

THE BABBLER

ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF ZIMBABWE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #7: JULY/AUGUST 1995

Mashonaland Branch

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MASHONALAND BRANCH ACTIVITIES

Regular Monthly Outings

1. Mukuvisi Woodlands: Sunday 2nd July and 6th August 1995. Meet at Paget Road entrance at 7.00 a.m. There will be a vehicle guard in attendance.
2. Lake Chivero Bird Sanctuary: Sunday 9th July and 13th August 1995. Meet at Marimba Shopping Centre at 7.00 a.m. Beginners are especially catered for. Vehicles parked in a safe area. Bring your chairs and tea.

Saturday Afternoon Outings

1. 22nd July 1995. Blackfordby Tobacco Training Institute. Meet at P O Inez Terrace at 2.00 p.m. Bring chairs and tea.
2. 19th August 1995. Gletwyn Farm (Mr. Ian Ross). Meet at Chisipite Shopping Centre at 2.00 p.m.

Sunday Outings

1. 30th July 1995. Mazowe Citrus Estate. Meet at Ashbrittle Shopping Centre at 7.00 a.m.
2. 27th August 1995. Audley Farm. Trevor Gordon - Darwendale. Meet at Greencroft Shopping Centre (Mobil Garage). Left side of Lomagundi Road at 7 a.m.

Evening Meetings

1. Thursday 20th July 1995. Mr. Arthur Dunkley will speak on "Birds in the Cayman Isles" illustrated with slides. Venue: Alexandra Sports Club. Time 6.30 p.m.
2. Thursday 17th August 1995. Mr. Michael Irwin will talk on "Bird Extinction in the last 10 000 years." He is a very knowledgeable and interesting speaker. Venue: Alexandra Sports Club. Time 6.30 p.m.

Inter-branch visit to Bulawayo: 11th - 12th August, 1995

Please indicate whether you are interested in attending. It is hoped that the Matabeleland Branch will be able to billet members out. Replies to Bryant Elliot, 7 Ashbrittle Crescent, Mount Pleasant.

Rifa Camp: 22nd September - 26th September, 1995

See attached form for details. Members from Eastern Districts Bird Club and Matabeleland Branch are very welcome.

EASTERN DISTRICTS BIRD CLUB

Chairman: Mr. K. Dixon 62882 Mutare
 Secretary: Miss G. Henning 4 Mimosa Court, 2nd Street, Mutare
 Recorder: Mr. A B (Tony) Curtis 60281 Mutare

Outings

Saturday 8th July 1995 Vumba 1400
 Sunday 30th July 1995 Cynara 0630

No venues and dates for August are available. For information nearer the date please contact Ken Dixon or Tony Curtis.

The group assembles at the Museum in Aerodrome Road at the time stated. It is always advisable to ring Tony Curtis or Ken Dixon to check on arrangements. Binoculars may be borrowed providing prior notice is given.

MATABELELAND BRANCHFuture Programme

Evening Meetings: Friday 7 July: Video evening. Two excellent videos entitled 'He dances for his Cormorants' and 'The Mountains of the Thunderer' (featuring the Condor)

Venue: 3A Holdengarde Ave Hillside. 8.00 p.m. Tel. 42474 for details.

Friday 4 August: 'Bird Bingo' Ken Blake has kindly agreed to lead an evening of 'Bird Bingo' based on his excellent slides. This should be a light-hearted and entertaining evening; do come and join us.

Venue: 3A Holdengarde Ave Hillside. Tel. 42674 for details.

MONTHLY OUTINGS

Sunday 16 July: Aisleby Waterfowl Count. Our Mid-winter count for the Waterfowl Survey. The Upper Dam is half-full and host to a multitude of ducks, therefore it will be a worthwhile exercise to put a total on each species. Meet at Aisleby Boom at 7.30 a.m. bringing morning tea. Tel. 42474 for details.

Sunday 30 July: Khami Ruins and Dam. The Council is planning to create a conservation area across the river from the ruins and we intend to draw up a checklist for this area.

Meet at the City Hall Car park at 7.30 a.m. Bring morning tea and lunch if you intend to stay on. Tel. 42474 for details.

AUGUST HOLIDAY WEEKEND: 11, 12, 13 August. We hope to host an Inter-branch visit from the Mashonaland region. Please let me know if you would be prepared to host some of our visitors for the duration of the weekend. Contact Martin Smith Tel. 42474.

AISLEBY: Saturday 26 August. As always, Aisleby continues to act as a magnet during the dry season and this winter outing should be rewarding. Meet at the boom at 2.30 p.m. or contact the co-ordinator Anne Perry Tel. 42137.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: The past few months have been comparatively busy for the branch with a number of achievements. At Aisleby a small group of stalwarts oversaw and contributed to the construction of a causeway to the hide. A labour gang was hired to fell trees which were kindly moved to the Ibis Dam by the farm. Logs were then sawn, suspended on bearers and strapped together with wires. We are now able to reach the hide, even when water levels are high. The reeds in front of the hide have been slashed; a farm employee is being paid a nominal fee to keep them at bay. Two notices have been commissioned and painted, but await poles and erection. Hopefully all will now recognise Aisleby as a 'bird sanctuary'.

The 'Paint a Bird' competition is being run again this term and notices have been sent to all Bulawayo schools. As before, the Museum and National Parks are assisting us and entries will be displayed at the Museum during the forthcoming school holidays.

Further developments are afoot in the Matopos which will hopefully answer some questions on the Verreaux's Eagle. Good Birding
Martin Smith

OUTING REPORTS

Great Dyke, Pucklehills Farm - 26th March 1995

Although whilst travelling towards the Great Dyke some cloud cover blew up once the 20 members arrived at the farm the weather was fine and sunny. Our walk passed through some paddocks where a number of birds were feeding on ripening Phoenix *reclinata* palm fruit. These included Grey Go-away-birds, African Grey Hornbill, Black-collared Barbet, Crested Barbet and Dark-capped Bulbul. Numbers of seedeaters such as Jameson's Firefinch, Blue Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin and Southern Grey-headed Sparrow were feeding on the grass seeds. We had excellent views of a Red-backed Shrike before crossing the small dam wall. On the dam were Little Grebe, Three-banded Plover, African Darter and Wood Sandpiper. Below the wall in some excellent riverine growth were Green Wood-hoopoe, Black-headed Oriole, Southern Black Tit, Bar-throated Apalis and a female Black Cuckooshrike. We heard Emerald-spotted Wood-dove, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Greater Honeyguide and Orange-breasted Bush-shrike. This area occupied the group until it was time to return to the homestead for tea. The very pleasant morning produced a total of 47 species.

Our thanks to Robin Gilmour for arranging the outing and to Boyce and Rozey Kok for their hospitality.

Colin Rawson

RAINHAM DAMS - 20th May 1995

My last visit to Rainham Dams was about 20 years ago and I remember sitting in a wooden hide built for us by the late Mr. Dawson and chatting to Patrick MacCartney - the founder of the Conservation Trust. At that time we were surrounded by water and the vleis were a quagmire, so I was not prepared for the dryness encountered or the disturbance everywhere. The habitat is typical savannah highveld grassland.

One dam was a mud puddle surrounded by acres of grey caked dry mud - someone was collecting cow dung - probably for fuel and everywhere people were crossing the farm. The other dam had a very noisy christening going on in it. Overhead light aircraft were circling non-stop and a little way off a quarry and a barracks were operational. In the grass there were granite stones which obviously fly out when the quarry blasts.

The bird list was short but it had some surprising quality. A Grey Heron, a Black-headed Heron, 47 African Spoonbill waiting at the water's edge to feed overnight, a Yellow-billed Stork, a Red-billed Teal (it may have been injured) - 2 Wattled Crane flew over and were looking for a quiet place to land! Crowned Lapwings were heard, 21 African Wattled Lapwings, 2 Three-banded Plovers and 7 Kittlitz's Plovers were seen. Two Black-bellied Bustards were seen. Several Cape Turtle-doves, 2 Laughing Doves and a male Namaqua Dove came for a drink. Three Marsh Owls were below the dam walls where Red-faced Mousebirds and Dark-capped Bulbuls could be heard.

There were 3 Grey-rumped Swallows; have these declined? (A report dated May to August 1971 stated that they were constantly present and seldom numbered less than 100). There was one certain Cape Longclaw - at least six were seen but not identified properly. A Common Fiscal and Magpie Shrike in the tops of thorn trees. Wattled Starlings, Greater Blue-eared Starlings, African Quailfinch and circa 300 Red-billed Quelea made up the list.

D V Rockingham-Gill, 4 Fernleigh Road, P O Borrowdale

P.S. Who knows when the Common Ostrich was reintroduced to LAKE CHIVERO (MCILWAIN RECREATIONAL PARK)?

P.P.S. answer to a question about trees for a suburban garden Meg Coates Palgrave recommended the following:

Bridelia micrantha, *Syzygium cordatum*, Olive, *Grewia occidentalis*, *Dombeya rotundifolia*, *Ficus sur*, *Ficus sycomorus*, *Phoenix reclinata*, *Rhus lancea*, *Ziziphus mucronata* and *Azelia quanzensis*.

HIPPO POOLS 19th-21st May 1995.

10 members of the Mashonaland Branch used the constructed accommodation and a further 6 camped over the weekend. The camp is owned by Ian and Sue Jarvis; it is situated in the UMFURUDZI Safari area in a lovely well-grassed spot on the river bank. The whole area is well-treed with larger trees towards the river edge. The junior member of the pod of hippo opposite the camp provided great entertainment in between bird-watching and a pod further upstream added to the noise by day and night, so the area is well-named. Members gathered gradually during the Friday and those present toward dusk made their way to a hide approximately 300 metres from camp. We watched some 50 Double-banded Sandgrouse fly in to a small pan for an evening drink and socialising. The birds kept up a continuous gay chuckling sound; such a pity they arrived so late we were only able to see their colours for a few minutes in the fading light, but still a magic moment.

There are several clearly marked walks around the camp area or a lovely riverine walk upstream. We divided into 3 groups on Saturday morning and everybody walked - distances varied depending on the leader of the group! Most people followed the riverbank to begin with and then branched away on various paths. There were many birds to be seen early; Black-throated Wattle-eye, Bearded Scrub-robin, several species of kingfisher including Malachite Kingfisher and African Pygmy-kingfisher, all at the river edge. All species of hornbill for the area were seen including Trumpeter Hornbills who were obliging enough to call.

Saturday evening and Sunday morning, there was a choice of game-viewing drives with Ian, who knows the area well or further bird-walks. Sable, zebra and kudu were seen Saturday evening; the Sunday morning game-viewers were not so fortunate. Some birders headed for the hills on Sunday morning, others back to the river. Many shrikes were seen including lovely sightings of Orange-breasted Bush-shrike feeding, Grey-headed Bush-shrike and Red-backed Shrike. Saturday was a convivial evening with all members gathered around the campfire for drinks and supper. The African Wood-owl called unceasingly overhead.

A total of 124 bird species was recorded during the weekend; camp disbanded after lunch on Sunday when birders had gathered to discuss their lists. We had a lovely sighting of a pair of Racquet-tailed Rollers whilst driving away. A most enjoyable weekend, which should be repeated at least annually.

Eric and Barbara Silk

MOUNTAIN HOME Sunday March 26, 1995.

In describing birding on a crisp, clear, autumn day at Mountain Home so many superlatives come to mind that selection is difficult. I will settle for "most exhilarating" which will cover the cool, bracing unpolluted air alive with swifts and swallows, the golden sunshine, dramatic views - natural forest, grassland, mountains, plantations, layers of cotton-like mist lying in the valley bottoms - all the birds. Many people would be willing to spend a small fortune to share such a morning as we enjoyed. Even a single Blue Swallow could be the high spot of a whole safari for such a person. We lost count of the number of sightings - although it must be understood that we were seeing the same birds several times.

The climax was to observe those rare Blue Swallows at close quarters - both in flight and perched - close to a nesting site. This was an old mining prospector's trial shaft about a metre in diameter and almost concealed in long grass on a steep mountainside. We watched at least one bird enter and leave the shaft. The nest itself was not visible being too far down the shaft. The birds were clearly perturbed at our approach to the nest and several began to circle just above our heads. We wondered why they were so anxious. Could there still have been very young birds there less than three weeks before their usual departure date? There were probably not fewer than ten birds in the area which suggests that at least two pairs bred there this season. But even without the Blue Swallows we would have had an interesting outing. Another comparatively rare sighting was Gurney's Sugarbird (amongst the Proteas). Others included Bronzy Sunbird, Malachite Sunbird, Amethyst Sunbird and Variable Sunbirds; an Augur Buzzard and a Black-shouldered Kite; Lesser Honeyguide, Olive Bush-shrike, a possible Red-faced Crimsonwing (a very fleeting glimpse, not positively identified, but known to occur there). Total over 40 species. Our thanks yet again to John for another excellent morning and to Barbara for the life-saving tea.

Tony Curtis

Earlier in the month the OAZ held its AGM at Maleme Rest Camp, Matopos. For once the EDBC was well represented by the Chairman (Ken Dixon) and the scribe. This is always a pleasant occasion when we renew old acquaintances and make new friends. It was a pleasant surprise to find Mike and Pat Habgood in the next chalet to us - lack of water has driven them to abandon sailing. Now you know how bad things are in Matabeleland! There was nothing very controversial on the agenda and no revolutionary decisions were made. Dr. Peter Mundy enlivened the proceedings with his usual pithy comments. The new President is John Paxton and his Vice President is Dave Gray.

Tony Curtis

CYNARA - 8th April, 1995.

As usual, our favourite venue did not let us down. There is such a diversity of habits that if birds are missing in one quarter one can switch to another for compensation. As it happened we chose to ignore the big dam which promised little, opting instead for the fringes of the farmyard. Even on a cool, overcast, at times drizzly, afternoon we still managed to find 58 species.

A new route was decided for the 8 of us when Tony's car gave up a few hundred metres short of our usual parking spot. Down in the reeds, we found Southern Red Bishops and Thick-billed Weaver at their nests while a Black Crane wandered around unconcernedly on the shore. The Grey Crowned Crane was then seen for the first of many times. On the next dried up dam there were 4 Yellow-billed Storks. Many latish Barn Swallows swooped around in the company of a couple of Wire-tailed Swallows and some early Grey-rumped Swallows. An unusual water bird for this site was a solitary African Black Duck among the White-faced Ducks. Waders were pretty scarce although we did find one of each.

The sight of many birds on an irrigated cereal field led us off to an area we had never scrutinised. Enjoying their shower were Crowned Lapwings, Doves, African Wattled Lapwings and the inevitable Cattle Egrets. When we began to search the trees, we soon found lots of interest; 3 Bearded Woodpeckers, Violet-backed Starlings, Glossy Starlings [Cape Glossy Starling?] and

Red-winged Starling, Groundscraper Thrush and a pair of Striped Kingfisher. Finally, a Dark-capped Bulbul managed to force its way on to the list and we knew it was time to go. Ken Dixon

DOROWA Sunday 30th April 1995

Eight enthusiasts enjoyed the hospitality offered by Dorowa Minerals on April 30th. We are most grateful to the new manager Mr. Alec Mufukidsi and the Personnel Manager for their warm welcome, for the hot coffee awaiting our arrival at 0745, for the excellent lunch and for inviting Eric and Una to complete our pleasure.

The birding was interesting with one or two controversial sightings. A smaller total than we have come to expect at Dorowa; perhaps due to the overcast conditions, the approaching winter, the continuing drought; to the departure of most of the migrants; the absence of suitable mudflats for the waders (only a couple of Common Greenshank, one solitary Three-banded Plover and a pair of Water Thick-knees were seen). And perhaps because Eric is no longer there to organise them for us!

Species of special interest to us because they do not occur around Mutare were Magpie Shrike, Scaly-feathered Finch and Cut-throat Finches and White-browed Sparrow-weavers; the latter were seen for the first time at Dorowa on our previous visit and seem to have established themselves there. Alistair spotted two Racquet-tailed Rollers - a first for at least one in the party.

A good deal of discussion was caused by a dull brown bird quartering the main holding dam with lazy, rather jerky wing-beats, it was seen to have a white rump but remained too distant for any detail to be seen. It was thought to be an immature White-winged Tern although it appeared much more brown than illustrated in the field guides.

Further discussion was aroused by a small accipiter found lurking within a small leafy tree. It flushed twice, each time flying low into thick cover so that we were not able to see much detail. One diagnosis was Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk but this seemed unlikely at Dorowa. Perhaps immature Ovambo Sparrowhawk would be more probable.

Of particular interest too was the large number of Horus Swifts, confirming again, as at PENHALONGA, their association with mine dumps. No doubt they make use of the large number of burrows of the Brown-throated Martins, which were seen flying into and out from numerous burrows at the base of the old dump. The absence of any raptor's apart from an African Harrier-hawk (possibly more than one) and the Sparrowhawk(?) was remarked on - a drought-related phenomenon, severe shortage of prey. A pair of Senegal Coucals was seen at close range in a reedbed. Lilac-breasted Rollers were numerous. One Familiar Chat was seen. Sunbirds were very sparse; only one or two Amethyst Sunbirds and a single White-bellied Sunbird were recorded.

AB Curtis

Good Hope Farm ODZI 13th May 1995

The writer of the previous report, Tony Curtis, was not able to accompany us on this occasion but kindly left us instructions for our guidance. However, the 5 of us who undertook the trip were less than successful in following them. You would expect that 4 adults and a bright youngster would be able to find a dam, wouldn't you? But we didn't, and we didn't find many birds either. The highlight of the afternoon was the ascent of the biggest gomo on the farm from the summit of which we hoped at last to locate the dam but we didn't. Despite these setbacks, we all thoroughly enjoyed the outing and are grateful to Mrs Smith for allowing us to bash through a lot of her bundu in search of the dam.

We did in fact see a few dry country birds like White-crested Helmet-shrike, Grey Go-away-birds, both Greater Blue-eared Starling and Miombo Blue-eared Starling. The latter, according to Irwin, does not occur so far east. No doubt like the Meves's Starling we now find at CYNARA, the drought has caused this extension of territory.

Ken Dixon

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE EAGLE INSURANCE/S SAVE AUSTRALIA VERREAUX'S EAGLE
PROJECTS IN THE MATOPOS

The generous donation of funds by Eagle Insurance and SAVE Australia to the OAZ/Matobo Raptor Research Group has led to the formulation of new projects tying in to the existing Verreaux's Eagle Survey in the MATOPOS hills. Dr. Peter Mundy and Ngoni Chiweshe of National Parks have both been involved in the setting up of those projects and will both be running them with the assistance of the Matobo Raptor Research Group.

As Verreaux's Eagle breeding numbers have declined by about a third over the past twenty years or so, many questions have arisen concerning the cause or causes of this. Although the Verreaux's Eagles of the Matobo hills are possibly the best and most comprehensively studied population of eagles in the world, our knowledge of the movements of immature birds from the time they leave their natal area is still very scant. We believe that the Matobo population acts as a breeding nucleus for the Verreaux's Eagles and those immature birds are forced out of the area by territorial adults and must survive in the surrounding areas or move further afield. As the surrounding Communal lands are, for the most part, heavily degraded and hyrax populations are heavily utilised for carosses and meat, we doubt that the immature Verreaux's Eagles and other large raptors are finding enough to sustain themselves in these areas. If these eagles cannot find enough prey in these areas, do they move further afield or do they simply die off at a higher rate, causing a drop in the replacement rate in the adult population in the Matopos? This appears to be the case. In an attempt to address these and other questions, two projects will be undertaken this year, continuing into next year and a further ongoing tagging project is proposed for the future.

Ngoni Chiweshe will be visiting the Communal areas surrounding the National Park, speaking to schools, chiefs, elders and N'angas in an attempt to educate the local community about raptors and conservation, focusing particularly on the hyrax population, utilisation and to discuss possible alternatives and remedies to the situation. Ngoni will also monitor Verreaux's Eagle nests in the Communal lands (the few that are still occupied). Ngoni will have the use of a motorcycle purchased from funds donated by SAVE Australia, organised by Val Gargett through Dr Peter Mundy. The project should be in progress during the present school term.

The five radio transmitters to be fitted to eaglets for the tracking project have been collected and a transceiver has been loaned to us by the Raptor Research Group in South Africa. Dr Gerhard Verdoorn has helped us greatly by organising all this for us through Dr Mundy. He has also organised climbing equipment which will be used in this and other projects which require abseiling equipment. Mr Ron Hartley is also organising a "touch, up" abseiling course for the people involved which is greatly appreciated.

Nests and eaglets will be chosen from a cross-section of the Park and fitting of transmitters should take place in August. The immature birds will be tracked from an aeroplane which is being organised.

I am pleased to report that except for a few minor details, we are on schedule and these projects are now a reality thanks to all concerned.

We will endeavour to keep all those interested informed of progress and all results will be written up. An article is also planned, possibly to appear in the Air Zimbabwe in-flight magazine, which will provide coverage of the projects in the Matopos and for Eagle Insurance as well as for SAVE Australia in appreciation to all concerned.

Warren Goodwin

The Namaqua Dove (*Oena capensis*)

In the southeast lowveld we are fortunate, to have a rich variety of doves. I, like quite a few people here, am working fairly hard to try and protect them and most of the other wild animals - so we build big, long and very strong fences. However back to the main story I noticed a pair of these small doves

nesting on a fencing post (*Colophospermum mopane*) and at the time I thought it quite funny and stupid to do so, especially as it was a boundary fence. The rains came in fits and starts and while busy on electrifying the fence I observed this pair about two or three times a week. They started off with two eggs but only raised one chick. When trying to get the voltage up I asked the 'head fencing man' to go down that particular line and check it. Blow me down if the next day, when I went down the line to check the little chick had disappeared. At first confusion set in because I remember clearly the poor little thing was not ready to leave the nest. On closer inspection I saw someone's tracks near the post but decided to keep quiet about it after I realised there are still a lot of hungry people about. C Q Haarhoff

Bird Watching by Thorben Kristiansen - 23rd February 1995

My teacher for Bundu Watch Club asked me to write about when we all did some bird watching and counting.

I go to Ariel School and I am in Grade 3. I go to Bundu Watch Club every Thursday afternoon. One Thursday we were told that we were going to count birds for the Ornithological annual Bird Count. We were told to walk in two groups very quietly so that we did not disturb any birds. We were going to walk to our school dam.

I looked at trees and bushes, in the long grass and in the sky. It was fun to find out the sounds birds make and their names. The more I listened the more I heard. When I saw a bird, I looked at its size, beak, wings, tail and colour. The birds I saw were Southern Red Bishop, it was flying. I saw a European Bee-eater on the electricity line, it had beautiful colours. The best bird I saw was the Long-crested Eagle. It is a big bird, it was on the electrical pole and then I saw it flying. It had white under its wings. I heard a Cape Turtle-dove which said "Work harder work harder". I also heard a Red-faced Cisticola; it made a loud wink wink sound

Mashonaland Branch Outing Questionnaire Report Back

The trickle of replies to the Questionnaire has finally ended. My thanks to the 63 members who replied to the 375 posted. This represents a 16.8% return. Particular thanks go to those out of town members who live too far away to be able to attend meetings regularly but who took the trouble to send their thoughts. As one member commented "You cannot please everyone", however it appears that most replying members seem satisfied with present arrangements.

The number of monthly meetings seems in order though these inevitably at times clash with other Society meetings. Hopefully to ease the situation we intend to contact other Societies regarding itineraries and the possibility of joint outings and meetings. Outing starting times are generally suitable - very few felt outings commenced too early. Birds move early and when visiting areas some distance from Harare, it is necessary to start early. In future certain outings could be done "double shift", the dawn patrol followed by the layabouts for a bush breakfast! Afternoon visits normally start at 2.00 p.m., although as one member suggested later starts should be arranged to take in birds active at dusk. This does happen periodically at Rainham Dams and Ballantyne Park where members are, advised to bring "sundowners" and chairs and watch arrivals. A majority, over 90%, of replies felt new areas would be of interest. Agreed, but there are certain areas which should be visited regularly for many reasons e.g. Marimba Vlei and Ewanrigg Botanic Gardens. Having said that there are many areas not visited for many years as well as new areas to be explored. These together with those suggested in replies will be looked at and arranged for the future.

Thursday evening remains meeting night, though there were suggestions as to starting times. As per questionnaire many members would welcome talks on subjects other than birds. This will be arranged where possible, however subjects will be bird related. The new venue seems most acceptable. We hope to see you all there in future. Colin Rawson

TAIL FEATHERS

The following have paid 1995 subscriptions twice and will be credited for 1996:

K. Dixon, T A Fallon, M Middleton

Jacko Williams Membership Secretary

Saturday/Sunday 15th 16th July 1995, Annual Show for Aloe Cactus and Succulent Society at Mukuvisi Woodlands.

For sale at the selected craft stall colourful Sunbird feeders which really do attract Sunbirds.

OBITUARY: ALEC MANSON

We are very sorry to record the passing of our good friend Alec Manson on 24th March 1995. Alec was a skilful amateur ornithologist who devoted his retirement to detailed studies of the Bvumba birds based on years of netting, ringing and meticulous recording and analysis of his data. The recent OAZ publication "Birds of the Bvumba Highlands" could hardly have been completed without Alec's work and it is pleasing that he lived to see its' publication. Alec will be mourned and sorely missed by a host of friends both in Zimbabwe and worldwide and our very sincere sympathy goes out to Cecilia and Alec's family.

1995 SUBSCRIPTIONS

There are a number of members who have as yet not paid their 1995 subscriptions. PLEASE PAY UP - or this will be your last BABBLER

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Lake Chivero Bird Sanctuary

The padlock on the gate of the Sanctuary has seized up and we have had to buy a new one. Any person requiring access or a key contact John Paxton at Lasovsky Bros. on 794611 during office hours.